

JUSTIFICATION  
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
Office of Acquisition Operations  
Technology Acquisition Center  
23 Christopher Way  
Eatontown, New Jersey 07724
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a firm-fixed price task order to be issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Government-wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for the renewal of brand name BlueStripe FactFinder server software maintenance and technical support.
3. Description of Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology, Service Delivery and Engineering, Enterprise Operations, Enterprise Infrastructure Support (EIS), has a requirement for the renewal of brand name BlueStripe FactFinder server software maintenance and technical support for 750 software licenses used throughout VA's network. BlueStripe FactFinder software is a performance monitoring server software application management solution that VA uses in supporting information technology personnel in monitoring the performance and availability of application transaction systems throughout VA data centers. This software integrates into operating system layer servers and monitors all transactions between servers building a live, dynamic topology of the entire server system and displays any bottleneck path throughout a system of servers in real time. The objective of this software tool is to quickly isolate the cause of a performance problem to a specific cause or component but not to analyze the code level performance. The performance monitoring is not limited to any particular programming language, such as Java or .Net, and can monitor any and all communications in and out of a server or systems of servers without prior knowledge of the existence of the communications or any dependency on the communication source. The required software maintenance and technical support shall consist of all Original Software Developer minor updates, patches, fixes, and security resolutions developed by BlueStripe. In addition, telephone and email support shall be provided from 9:00AM to 5:00PM Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday, for the analysis, troubleshooting, and resolution of any software product-related problems or questions encountered by Government users. These maintenance and support services will ensure the current software is continually updated and remains fully operational. The total estimated price of the proposed action is REDACTED inclusive of a 12-month base period and two 12-month option periods.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting this exception to fair opportunity is Title 41 U.S.C. Section 4106(c)(2) as implemented by Federal

Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 16.505(b)(2)(i)(B) entitled, "Only one awardee is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services ordered are unique or highly specialized."

5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited: Based on market research as described in section 8 of this justification, it was determined that limited competition is available among authorized resellers of the required BlueStripe FactFinder server software maintenance and technical support on the NASA SEWP V GWAC. The proposed action is for the procurement of software maintenance and technical support services on existing BlueStripe FactFinder server software licenses used by VA for the performance monitoring of server transactions. VA previously acquired these perpetual licenses and deployed this proprietary software solution for monitoring the performance and availability of application transaction systems throughout VA data centers. Only software maintenance and support services provided by BlueStripe or an authorized reseller can meet the requirements as the existing software is proprietary to BlueStripe. Specifically, without access to BlueStripe proprietary source code, no other source is able to provide minor updates, patches, fixes, or security resolutions and properly configure these services. Moreover, the BlueStripe FactFinder performance monitoring software solution will not interface with any other vendors' performance monitoring software solutions. The use of any other performance monitoring software application product would severely degrade VA's ability to support and manage the existing performance monitoring capability which would result in interoperability and compatibility issues. Performance monitoring software solutions from any other vendors would require an extensive and complex redesign, development, and integration of a new VA performance monitoring software solution. In addition, an alternative performance monitoring software solution would also require proprietary software maintenance and technical support which would not resolve the inability to obtain maintenance and support from vendors other than through the respective software providers. Without the required software maintenance and support, the existing BlueStripe software performance would eventually degrade and would not be usable by VA as its performance monitoring software solution. Additionally, VA would not receive security updates, which could compromise VA's network security posture. Finally, since the software is proprietary, no third party source exists that provides analysis, troubleshooting, and resolution of any software product-related problems other than BlueStripe or an authorized reseller.
6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Currently, no other companies other than BlueStripe or an authorized reseller can provide the required software maintenance and technical support for VA's existing perpetual licenses. Market research was conducted, details of which are in section 8 of this justification. This effort did not yield any additional sources that can meet the Government's requirements. It was determined, however, that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers for this brand name software maintenance and support. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), notice of award of this action will be synopsized on the

Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) within 14 days of award and this justification will be made publicly available. This justification shall also be posted with the solicitation on the NASA SEWP V website for review by prospective offerors.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: The Government will continue to conduct market research, review, and revalidate its requirements as performance monitoring software solutions continue to evolve. In addition, the requiring activity will continue to monitor whether alternate software maintenance and technical support emerges that can meet VA's needs.
8. Market Research: In January 2016, market research was conducted by VA's EIS technical experts via internet research and a review of industry publications to identify if there are other service providers or performance monitoring software vendors with products capable of meeting the Government's requirements. Market research revealed that CA Technologies, Inc.'s Application Performance Monitoring; BMC Software, Inc.'s Performance Monitoring; Arcturus Technologies, Inc.'s Applicare and Dell Inc.'s Foglight offer similar performance monitoring software solutions but cannot meet VA's required software maintenance and technical support needs because these contractors cannot access the source code and technical data of the VA's current proprietary BlueStripe solution. Each software developer offers a proprietary system and associated services that will only operate with its respective hardware and software. Based on this market research, only BlueStripe software maintenance and technical support can meet VA's technical requirements.

Additional market research was conducted in July 2016 by utilizing the NASA SEWP V Market Research Tool. It was determined that there are numerous NASA SEWP V GWAC holders that are authorized resellers of the required brand name BlueStripe software maintenance and technical support under North American Industry Classification System code 541519. Therefore, limited competition is anticipated for this requirement.

9. Other Facts: None.